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the fight for democracy, rights of small nations, and universal domination of right by consent of free peoples—to say that these were insincerely held or were not worth fighting for, or that they were wrongly invoked as motives for fighting against the Germans, would of course be utterly false. Yet the fact remains that “the Entente Powers had begun the war with the proclamation of those very principles almost three years earlier”. Either these principles were not deemed by the American people sufficiently important to fight for, or the nation and its leaders had as a whole been unaware that they were the issues at stake until the beginning of 1917.

What, then, of ideals? They have influence, but they are normally conditioned by economic conditions, and this is not a moral principle but a historic law. After the war we had a treaty which applied the high moral principles professed by the Allies to the defeated enemy, but did not make them binding upon the victors. There has been no improvement; there is not likely to be any until nations begin to recognize the folly of economic imperialism, to see that the game is not worth the candle. Now, thinks Mr. Gibbons, if Germany, excluded as she is from all participation in world politics, should nevertheless prove capable of again becoming a prosperous nation, the lesson would not be lost upon the other peoples of the world. Meanwhile the partial success of the Washington Conference is a cheering sign of the times.

Mr. Gibbons is far removed in spirit from those who hold that because there is necessarily a struggle for the survival of the fittest between nations as between individuals, therefore we should accept this fact as a sort of divine ordinance and play the brute game as brutally as possible. No, the right ought to prevail. The question is only of the way in which it can prevail in a human society governed by economic laws. We are, then, to be moral opportunists in a world the economic determinism of which we must fully realize.

This seems a reasonable point of view. At all events the conclusions which Mr. Gibbons reaches regarding the principal moot points—the significance of the Russian Revolution, the policies of President Wilson, the Treaty of Versailles—seem eminently sane, clear, and unhesitating.

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THE CLASH. By Storm Jameson. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

It is not because one's national pride is offended by any false portraiture that one regards as absurd the putting forth of Storm Jameson's *The Clash* as a study in the conflict between the English and the American temperament. Doubtless there are some authentic British traits mixed up in the story. For all one knows, there may be real American traits in it, too. Traits common to both nations would seem, according to this picture, to be drunkenness, passion, foolish talk, and general immorality. But if there is anything distinctly national to be found in any of the persons Miss Jameson depicts, it is so obscured by sex, temperament, and general caprice as not to be distinguishable.

*The Clash* is a whirlwind of a story—no story at all. Of the plot, it is enough

to say that it deals with the amatory adventures of a rather unusual young English woman, one of the said adventures being a liaison (after her marriage to a deserving Englishman) with a soldier from Texas. A general moral and mental demoralization, apparently the reaction of the war, is continuously depicted, and there are all sorts of incidents that apparently have no necessary relation to the main thread of the story. The author well portrays transient scenes, passing attitudes, bits of actuality keenly realized for a moment, conceived with a kind of excess of imagination. But the picture is never seen steadily from one point of view; the persons never remain long enough in one posture or in one frame of mind to enable one to judge whether they are human beings or chimæras. Indeed, persons are represented by passions, bits of jest or highflown nonsense, strained moods, unrepresentative impulses—by the most exaggerated aspects of personality, in short. Is there, may there be, something real beneath all this? One doesn't know.

Imaginative unrestraint in fiction may work out, variously, into romanticism, humor, vulgarity, brilliant but unsteady visioning of facts such as passes for witty criticism, tragedy, "with Hamlet left out"; into every kind of mental glint and sparkle, into all manner of crudities and subtleties. In *The Clash* the author's unrestrained and capricious fancy—a fancy evidently sensitive to the impact of fact yet not a slave to reality—works out into all these forms, and presents to us a dazzling but meaningless whole. Even the alleged meaning, which one suspects to be superficial enough, gets lost. The supreme quality of the story is its versatility. Seldom, if ever before, one thinks, has so much silliness and so much intuition, of a sort, been so brilliantly packed into so short a tale. The great merit of *The Clash* is that it is not dull. It affects one with a bewildered interest, but its final effect is unsatisfying. Of one of Storm Jameson's books *The London Times's* reviewer said that it was "nothing but talk, talk, talk", while a critic writing for *The London Bookman* declared that the same work "seems written with the very lifeblood of the author, with the very core of her brain fibre". Profound reflection may induce the belief that there is nothing necessarily inconsistent between these two judgments.

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CHAOS OR COSMOS? By Edgar L. Heermance. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company.

Science, like religion, leads into ultimate mysteries; matter, as it is analyzed, seems to dissolve into smoke; old-fashioned physical materialism is more or less discredited; and it really seems as if, with all the exciting new ideas that we possess and with all the fine negations on which we pride ourselves, we ought to be able to construct some kind of modern version of Christianity which shall fit in with our present scientific notions, our habits, and our social conditions. Nothing drastic or revolutionary is contemplated or wanted. All that is desired is some kind of sensible working hypothesis that we can call religious and that is plainly not unscientific.